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MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE

The New Christian Hymnal, edited by Rev. H. J. Kuiper. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids. 1929. Reviewed by Hugh Cook.

A book review of a hymnal? Aren't book reviews supposed to deal with things like novels and serious books?

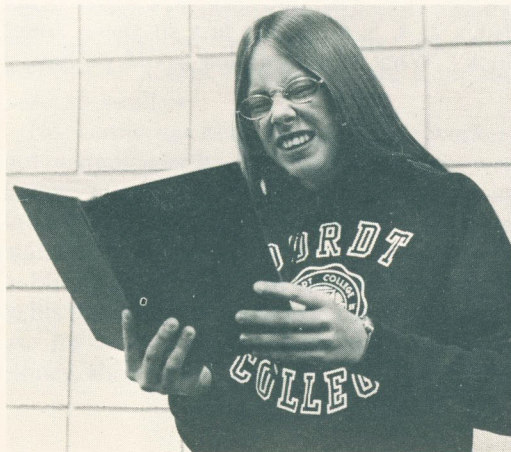
Or are they? Why not a review of a hymnal, especially since it's the one we use twice a week in chapel. For several years now, I've felt a general dissatisfaction with the **New Christian Hymnal**, a dissatisfaction that has surfaced especially whenever I've had to speak in chapel and was faced with the chore of finding hymns suitable to the message. Honestly, I had a hard time finding some appropriate hymns that weren't part of the small number of hymns we seem to sing over and over in chapel.

But what am I doing writing a review of a hymnbook? What do I know of music? Very little, but I do have some idea, as a Christian, of what constitutes bad theology, and as a person interested in literature I also have some feeling as to what makes bad poetry. And this hymnal has enough of both. So I'm evaluating it not so much musically as I am textually. Any hymnal that cannot stand up to this kind of scrutiny should not be used. And I don't think this hymnal stands up.

There's the date, first of all. 1929! That's right! Are we suggesting no valuable hymns have been written since that date? I don't think so, but in a denomination already characterized by the use of too many 19th and 18th C. hymns at the expense of ones more contemporary, and especially since we are dealing here with a fairly young audience, namely college students, it would seem to me rather important that we be more mindful of being somewhat contemporary.

I don't intend to demean the great hymns that come out of our Reformed tradition. These should be retained by us, for they tie us to our roots. But I'd feel better if the **New Christian Hymnal** had a stronger representation of these. While the editor states in his introduction that he has aimed at theological soundness, rejecting especially "the persistent attempts of aggressive liberals to spread their pernicious teachings among unsuspecting christian people by means of modernist hymns and hymnals," a tendency worth rejecting, yet at the same time Kuiper has fallen into the opposite trap of foisting upon these same unsuspecting christian people too many hymns that have come out of conservatistic, fundamentalistic, pietistic

churches. Riffle through the hymnal, and they readily come into view. Especially bad are songs like "I'm A Pilgrim and a Stranger" (#314), and "Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?" (#317). There is even an openly deistic rendition of Psalm 19 written by the 18th C. rationalist Joseph Addison, an ardent deist. Read it—it's #41. Mr. Meeter and I happened to be standing beside each other in chapel when this song was first sung, and we both stopped suddenly in mid-hymn, looked at each other in disbelief when we realized the hymn's nature, and somehow mumbled the rest of it.



FRUSTRATED SINGER

Moreover, there's some awfully out-of-date stuff. Too many hymns still talk of life's proverbial "stormy billows" and "gathering clouds" and "stormy seas" and other such hackneyed stuff.

And talk about bad poetry! What do you do with refrains like

Just when I need Him most,
Just when I need Him most,
Just when I need Him most,
Jesus is near to comfort and cheer,
Just when I need Him most.

The sentiments may be alright, but the poetry isn't. Here's another:

I'm only a sinner saved by grace!
Only a sinner saved by grace!
Only a sinner saved by grace!
This is my story, to God be the glory,
I'm only a sinner saved by grace!

Notice the pattern?

Why don't we just frankly admit that this is a bad hymnal (it has never received synodical sanction), and send it to the paper shredder. If we really feel chapel is an important part of the college scene, it seems to me we should also be willing to spend the bit of money required to turn it into something meaningful.

But what are we going to replace it with? Maybe there's nothing worthwhile. Well, there are some hymnals worth our consideration. One that stands at the top of my list is the **Trinity Hymnal**, published by the Orthodox Presbyterian church. It has variety (730 hymns!), responsive reading selections, and above all, hymns of a much sounder Biblical character. Identified at the head of each hymn is the Scripture passage it deals with. While the hymnal still includes the infamous deistic rendition of Psalm 19, it generally is a much better hymnal than the one we presently use.

I don't know who makes the decisions on this thing, but whoever does, I urge them to eliminate the **New Christian Hymnal**, which all too often is neither new nor Christian, and instead provide us with the kind of hymnal a college standing in the Reformed tradition deserves. That means good theology and good poetry. **Our Lord** deserves nothing less!

SPANISH CLASS (or any class)

*A happy rumbling
of playful thunder
grumbles,
somewhere
in the distance.
His messenger,
the rain,
dances
a light stacatto
on the window,
calling me
from this
foolishness
of confusion.*

—Marianne Scholte

FEEDBACK

The Cannon staff encourages readers to respond to all published material. Letters may be dropped off at the switchboard.

What's your talent?

by Sandy Vanden Berg

It is my belief that every person has a talent, or the potential for developing one.

"Now wait a minute," you say. "That's a pretty loaded statement. You can't possibly mean ME. Why I can't even write a letter, let alone a short story. I don't know anything at all about music and my art is pretty sketchy. (excuse the pun) God certainly hasn't called me to be a preacher, and just the thought of talking to somebody I don't know, let alone acting in front of people I do know, scares me half to death. How can you say I have a talent? Why, I'm not even intellectual!"

Can you be so sure about that, without ever seriously trying to find out something you can do reasonably well? Can you, as a person, created in God's image, really say you have nothing to give yourself, others or God?

I find that people everywhere today are all to comfortable with that "I can't do anything" philosophy. It's a good, convenient cop-out of the Christian community. But it's also the Devil's lie.

God has created us all as unique individuals. I grant you that some are better writers, or artists, or musicians than others. But then, some have also worked hard to develop these God-given talents, and are still working hard on them.

It seems to me that the issue of talents has been a sadly neglected theme in the Christian community and one that has left a decidedly wrong impression with most of us concerning who the talented are.

Take for example the area of the Arts. Looking back in our history one can pick out two very prevalent views—of the pragmatist and the rationalist. The pragmatist says of the Arts: "What is the use of it?" The rationalist says: "Art is too emotional—too mystical. Better stay away from it." You can see for yourself what effect these two views have had upon the Christian community. The Arts have become a thing to be avoided—people who have talents in such a direction are either in a higher class than the average person, or are just plain weird.

But a person in the Arts is no different from anyone else. The artist (and by artist I don't mean someone who just slaps paint on a canvas) may come up with something so decidedly profound, or simple in its simplicity, that we find ourselves moved to tears, compassion, laughter, or just struck to see something that we had never thought of before, in a completely different light. We say that person has a definite talent. But what about you? Don't you too, have a definite talent?

It may be that your talents do not lie in the direction of the Arts at all. It may be that you are able to do something that the artist, or writer, or dramatist finds very hard to do. You may be very good at talking with people and understanding them, at sewing, or gardening, or building houses. But the fact remains—you do have a talent and it's a very

distinct one. Because only you can do what you are supposed to do. No one else can exactly express the same thing in the very same way.

You can see that with the artists and the writers. No two writers write exactly alike or choose to pick the same subject material. No two artists choose to paint the same landscape scenes. Yet we say that these people have talents—that each one is talented—and then almost in the same breath deny that we do have a talent, or even have the possibility of one.

That is something I find very hard to understand. I really fail to see how any Christian can say he has no talents whatsoever, when Christ clearly says He gives His gifts freely to **all** men—the Christian as well as the non-Christian.

God didn't say: "Now I'm going to take No.'s 1, 3, 7, 13, and give them talents and No.'s 2, 4, 5, 6, 8...can just sit there, tough luck." What kind of a God would we have if

INHIBITION

*Words drop out—
empty.
The meaning is still
contained inside.
Fear chokes it
down again.
Plastic existence is
a shadow
Who slinks in
doorways
And sits in corners
and looks
Into the spaces
where
There is no-one.*

—Marianne Scholte

Writing Award

An award of \$150 will be given to the Dordt student who makes the most significant contribution to campus writing during the 75-76 school term. The prize will be awarded to the person whose writing gives evidence of sustained quality. Prose and poetry, fiction, essays, and articles may be submitted, but the writing must have been done during the 75-76 school term.

Any student who wishes his writing to be considered should submit a folder with copies of his articles, poems, essays, or papers to Hugh Cook or Mike Vanden Bosch, English professors. Any writing published in either the **Diamond** or the **Cannon** may be submitted.

This award is being made possible through an anonymous friend of the college.

Dordt's English department will judge the manuscripts.

He had done this? God is a God of order. He never does things randomly or haphazardly. He really means it when He says: "I give my gifts freely to **all** men." But I think we would like to get hung up on all the minor details and forget the issue.

One such detail is that of self-esteem, and might I add, one of the most basic ingredients necessary in the expression of our talents. Now be honest with yourself. If you find yourself reacting negatively to this business of talents, might it not be that you have a poor self image of yourself? For a person who feels he has nothing to offer anyone else, literally can't, until he comes to see that he does have something.

Can you appreciate yourself for what you are and be satisfied with yourself? God hasn't asked all of us to be a Houdini, or a Michaelangelo, or a Hemingway. There are some heights which we will never attain. But that doesn't mean we can't try. Each of us, in our own way, has some gift, some talent, no matter how small, that we can use and develop. But if we fill our minds and hearts with feelings of inferiority and worthlessness,

(con't, page 3)

English Conference

On October 16, 1975, the CMA English Division will hold its annual fall meeting at Huron College, Huron, South Dakota. The theme of the conference will be "Careers for English Majors." The subject will be introduced by Ron Beck, a former English professor, who has himself changed his career to that of a writing consultant with a scientific research firm. Opportunity for discussion of individual questions will be given at group discussions and at other times. The cost of travel, food, and lodging (one night) for students and English faculty members will be paid by the CMA. Interested English majors who wish to learn what career options are available should sign the sheet on Mr. Vander Berg's office door—#24 in the faculty office suite west of the media center. Tentatively, the English faculty plans to leave the afternoon of the 15th and return the evening of the 16th.

CANNON STAFF

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Faculty Advisor: Hugh Cook

Lenny

by John Drexhage

No, it's not a comedy and it's not about a comic either. Lenny is something of deeper significance; it hits the audience hard, and maybe a bit too hard. From the beginning we know that something fatal is to happen, an atmosphere which is reinforced by the use of black and white. **Lenny** opens with an interview with his wife, Honey, a few years after his death, and thereafter the whole movie is spliced with interviews with her, his mother, and his agent. We all know something tragic is to happen, we just are ignorant as to when it will happen.

Fosse uses the technique of flash-forward most effectively to bring across the futility of Lenny's life. He also splices in sections of a club date Lenny is performing sometime toward the end of his career. Each clip from this monologue is inserted into the film's biography of Lenny at a moment when what is going on in his life illustrates what he is saying at the nightclub. This technique makes it appear that Lenny's personal miseries are what keep his comedy act going. At the end, when the film is reaching closer and closer to the actual nightclub date, Lenny's whole life seems to be caught up in his act.

What makes the film particularly tragic is that by the middle it seems that Lenny has finally found something to work for, he actually has a goal in life. He believes that if everyone would just come out and say what they feel, the words and obscenities they

express would soon lose their power. It's only the connotation behind a word that makes it forceful. Lenny believes that if we speak our true emotions we would lose a lot of our anxieties, and other people would not be offended if they became a part and parcel of the English language. What a ridiculous goal, you say? It may be, but that is not the point of Fosse's film. His point is that Lenny took this idea to **heart** and **believed** in it. The only problem was that he was not allowed to profess his belief, he was stifled by the law, and therefore saw no hope. The inevitable result: suicide.

Fosse tries to portray Lenny as a social Messiah, which is shown when Lenny is lying dead, naked with arms outstretched on his bathroom floor. Like all prophets, Fosse argues, the existing laws suppressed his freedom and beliefs. Fosse sees in Lenny something much more than I ever did. The melodramatic quality in the film is at times a bit too obvious, and therefore asks the reviewer to accept things that are a bit too hard to swallow.

No, Lenny was not a social miracle worker, but neither was he a comedian. Lenny was Lenny, a man who made sure nothing was sacred (not even Jackie Kennedy), and yet a man who screamed for recognition in his public life, and sympathy and understanding in his private life. A man who callously had no use for anything (publicly), but when with Honey, showed how insecure he actually was.

OF BIRDS AND BARDS

*The swallow darts
In graceful, azure beauty,
Floats, glides, swoops,
Rides out her rhythms
On the wings of the wind—
Unseen as the Spirit,
Who gives life, breath, all things—
Till she nests in God's altars.*

*Pecking at suet, grains,
Berries, bits of bread
Just outside the windows
Of everyday experience,
The sparrow hops, sorties,
Chirps, flirts, poses
To the inscape tune
Of Him Who upholds him.*

*Diving for fish,
The pelican scans the underwater,
Dim as embryonic symbol,
To bring up the brightest,
Tastiest gulletful for him who waits
To extract the pocketed prize:
His livelihood
And fitting gift from God.*

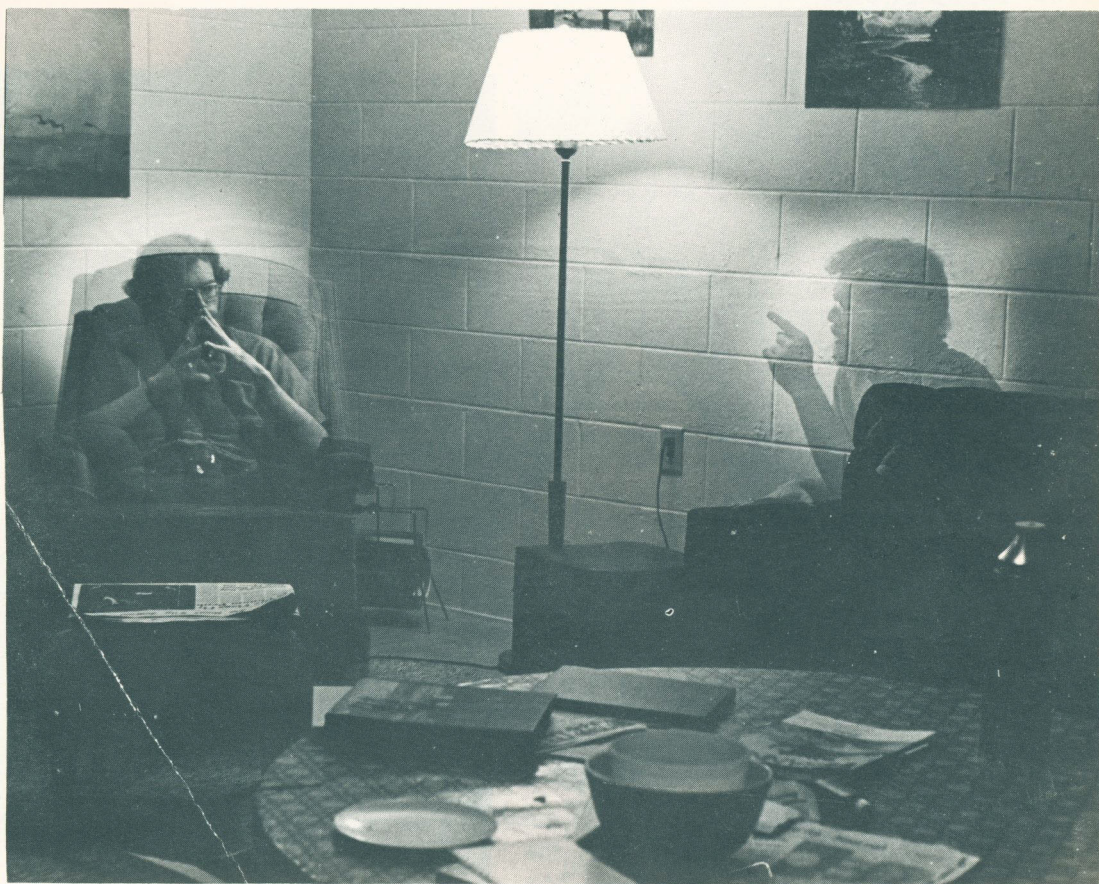
*Planing the thermals,
The eagle kingly soars
Above his conquered realm.
A richly scintillant metaphor,
He sentries for Jehovah,
Nobly oversees, yet stoops
For his Provident Creator
Who has taught him how to prey.*
—Merle Meeter

Talents, con't . . .

then we do a grave injustice, not only to ourselves, but to our God. By putting ourselves down, we are in reality, putting down our God.

This problem of how we view ourselves and our talents is not only an important one but a crucial one to the Christian community. There is a world today that is crying for the Christian to wake up and take a hard look at himself. There are people who need you—yes you—to offer them the direction, guidance, and perspective that you alone can give. And last of all, there are Christians—who are trying to develop their God-given talents, in all areas of life, who see or feel no encouragement from other Christians to do so.

You see then that this whole area of talents is a lot heavier than you realized, isn't it? Because I'm not only saying that each person has a talent, or the potential for one. I'm also saying that each person has the responsibility to develop himself to be the full and living creature God made. In other words, to be complete. If we can see that, do that, then we will not only edify the Christian community, but will also in so doing bring glory to our God.



Introspection

by Cal Meuzelaar

Art Profile

Rembrandt: an intro

by Syd Hielema

Rembrandt's "The Nightwatch," which was insanely attacked in Amsterdam a few weeks back, serves well to introduce us to the painter and the times in which he lived. Rembrandt van Rijn is probably the most famous figure to come from seventeenth century Holland, a period known as the Golden Age of the Netherlands.

The title "The Nightwatch," which is not Rembrandt's own, is completely misleading.

If you take the time to count, you'll notice that there's actually quite a few more than eighteen people in this painting. This is a good indication of the Rembrandt who refused to be tied down by convention. Instead of painting eighteen heads staring bleakly into space, he throws in a little drama, shows them in action, and adds a few characters which he finds more interesting (like the little girl just left of center). The spend thrifty eighteen were quite upset by the painting: they had paid their hard-earned cash while several others got in for nothing.

Rembrandt's life-style wasn't so typically Dutch. His modest, hard-working parents hadn't prepared him for a life of riches and fame. He lived like a Bohemian eccentric artist, wearing only second hand clothing and spending enormous amounts of money on useless items. His students would drive him crazy by painting pennies on the workshop floor, which he would continually try to pocket.

Even so, his paintings reflected his humble, hard-working background. He wasn't the most popular portrait painter, because the customer might have to sit for two or three months before he was done. His work contained no grand visions, but gloried in the simple, everyday affairs of life. His nudes are often pudgy, his self-portraits are not at all flattering.

Note, for example, the self-portrait reproduced here. The artist's wrinkled face and toothless grin almost make him look senile. A friend appears vaguely in the background, blending in with the darkness, creating the drama of a shared anecdote with

his slight smile. The light falls over the left shoulder, hiding half of the face, but still illuminating the emotions that are etched on an aging Rembrandt.

"Christ Healing the Sick," commonly known as the "Hundred Guilder Print" is probably Rembrandt's best known etching.



Christ Healing the Sick

Though more than forty people are pictured here, it does not look at all cluttered. Every person is somehow involved with the action, expressing either the hope of healing or simply curious amazement. Christ's illuminated figure, surrounded by darkness, clearly establishes him as the concentration point of the work.

Some Christians have discredited Rembrandt's work, complaining that he led a rather loose life. Regardless of his life-style, the emotional depth and everyday simplicity of his work can be a source of joy to any believer.



Self-portrait

In fact, the depicted scene takes place in broad daylight. The nighttime effect is created by the chiaroscuro technique, a technique Rembrandt is famous for. Chiaroscuro literally means "light-dark," and usually features a dark background with light falling on faces. The paintings reproduced here illustrate that this technique effectively accentuates facial expression and heightens emotional intensity.

The subject matter of "The Nightwatch" is typical of seventeenth century Holland. The painting is actually a group portrait, paid for by eighteen members of a militia company. Such portraits were as common then as group pictures are today. Holland was full of painters, and the Dutch did their best to keep them occupied. Portraits, street scenes, harbours and windmills were almost mass produced. A small Dutch living room wasn't considered "gezellig" without an original painting of some sort. Rarely has there been such a healthy situation where art was so intimately connected with the everyday life of a people.



The Nightwatch

Arson and Old Street Cars

by Kevin Kelley

Two old ladies whose pastime is mixing arsenic and cyanide with their elderberry wine. A cellar cemetery occupied by twelve elderberry wine connoisseurs. A nephew who thinks he is Teddy Roosevelt, and another who looks like Boris Karloff. Sound absurd? You're absolutely right. But Joe Kesselring built a show around these strange idiosyncrasies which, in the words of the Guthrie Theatre, "has come to be regarded as a classic in the comic theatre." I think the person who made this assessment should see what Mr. Webster has to say about the word 'classic.' Kesselring entitled his show **Arsenic and Old Lace**.

I saw the Guthrie's production of this show September 13th. It made for an amusing evening. From a production standpoint, however, there were a few things which weren't too funny.

The production I saw was riddled with understudies, who were unfamiliar with their parts, and whose performances could be termed somewhat substandard. "Be fair," you might say, "they were probably inexperienced and had to jump in at the last minute." Obviously. But it seems to me that when a person attends a theatre of national repute, he should be able to expect a certain degree of professionalism.

It has been said that "repetition is the essence of comedy." If that is true, this show was heavily perfumed. In fact, after the 38th time "Teddy" charged up San Juan Hill, screaming "charge" at the top of his voice, one began to ponder the possibility of there being at least one hill in that war that Roosevelt walked up quietly.

I noticed something else about the show which I shouldn't have. The make-up. On two or three of the players it was quite pasty and poorly blended. Granted, I'm being a bit picayunish. But make-up is intended to assist character portrayal, not detract from it. Again, it's just one of those things that makes the difference between going to a play and an evening at the theatre.

Things weren't all bad. There were some hilarious bits of business carried off quite well, thanks to a sporadically imaginative director and an ingenious set. The set was the best thing about the whole show. It lent itself beautifully to the business. Without going into burdensome detail, in my estimation it redeemed the show.

All said, the play is funny on occasion. I laughed along with everyone else. But given access to the same set, I think the Calaveras County Community Playhouse could have staged an equally enjoyable production.

The following day I experienced **A Streetcar Named Desire**. Because of the previous evening's performance, and the untold number of times this play has been produced since its conception, I was a bit apprehensive as I took my seat in the theatre. But my apprehensions were unfounded. The Guthrie has given the "old streetcar" a new coat of paint. This show has to rank as one of the most powerful productions I've ever seen. It was solid, right down to the laces on Palo Gonzales' boots.

When I watch a show, I usually ask myself, "What would I have done differently were I the director?" This time I couldn't answer that question.

The casting was superb. The acting just wouldn't quit. It was some of the best character portrayal that I have ever seen. Some of the people had been in the show the night before. I'm not sure what it was they were missing, but sometime between productions they had found it. In full measure.

Again, the set designer is to be praised. He knows his stuff. He implemented screen doors, frameworks, and wispy gauze partitions in presenting an 'Elysian Fields' that I think even New Orleans could be proud of.

Even the lighting was well worth mentioning. Unique backlighting techniques were used, along with ultraviolet light on streetsigns seemingly suspended in nothingness. Well-designed lighting is a sign of a first

class production, and this show was first class all the way.

Was it worth it to go all the way to Minneapolis to see these shows? Yes. I gained some insights into the professional theatre from the things that I liked, but especially from the things which I didn't like.

THE BIG IMPRESSION

*I look silly as
I shake my cup
and spill coffee
all over the table.
I couldn't be more
obvious if I stuck
leaves in my ears.
For heaven's sake,
couldn't you be cool
like, say, a cucumber
or even . . .
. . . an icicle?*

—Marianne Scholte



*Jesus Christ where
are you hidden
do I look wrong...
at black
not white.*

*Jesus Christ where
are you, found
and never lost...
are you
in white
not black.*

—Diana Vander Wal



by Gerald Cupido

EASTER MORNING—10:00 A.M.

*God, do you ever
die inside, your thoughts extending to
the person next to you
in the pew, calmly singing
of love that reaches up, but only echoes in
the anthem of
a thousand voices singing
"I serve a risen Savior,"
in the sanctuary tomb?*

*God, am I nothing
but dull wax
stopped mid-point and stuck
to the side of a burning candle
for you?*

*Then melt me,
God,
till I burn
strong again.*

—Sandy Van Den Berg

WHEN CAN WE GET TOGETHER?

in this season
my watch is al
ways wound, th
e ticking clin
gs to me all d
ay and paces m
y breathing in
the dark, cons
tant beneath m
y pillow. left
wrist tattooed
by timex. impa

led on the wal
l with last ye
ar's tacks, my
hours are insc
ribed in indel
ible blueblack
highlighted in
yellow. everyb
ody knows when
i should be wh
ere. see, i am
on all the lis

ts. i have thr
ee unhighlight
ed hours on th
ursday (if the
psych. assignm
ent is done an
d that meeting
is postponed).
i haven't been
able to unpack
my moth-balled
daydreams yet.
—Mimi Ernest

